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KGB in Norway's foreign office

Late in January, Arne Treholt, a prominent official from the Norwegian Foreign Office, was arrested at an airport outside Oslo while on his way to Vienna, Austria, to meet KGB Gen. Gennedij Titov, who had been expelled from Norway a few years earlier. Mr. Treholt, who as acting leader of the press division of the foreign office had managed the visit of Vice President George Bush a few days earlier, was caught with secret documents in his briefcase.

Realizing the game was up, Mr. Treholt chose to cooperate with Norwegian intelligence. His arrest sent shock waves throughout the Labor Party, where he had been active for a number of years. The vice chairman of the party, Einar Forde, deeply troubled, admitted that he was a close friend of Mr. Treholt. He was not the only one. A charming extrovert, Mr. Treholt had a wide circle of friends not only in the Labor Party, but also among journalists and intellectuals, all of whom he betrayed with the coolness of a Kim Philby.

Mr. Treholt was not only a conventional spy, one who transmitted top secrets to the Soviet intelligence, but also a prominent example of the influence agent, who actively manipulates opinions and decisions.

The Treholt case is, for a number of reasons, particularly shocking to the left-wing establishment in Norway, which tends to regard the influence agent as a phantom created by paranoid right-wingers. The left wing, having gained ascendancy in the Labor Party during the 1980s, was about to establish an anti-NATO posture, signaled by its opposition to the deployment of Pershing and Cruise missiles in Europe.

Although the Labor Party is fervently trying to belittle Mr. Treholt's role in this opposition, it was too prominent to be denied entirely. As personal secretary to Jens Evensen, member of the Cabinet of former Prime Minister Odvar Nordli, Mr. Treholt is known to be the brain behind Mr. Evensen's proposal for the so-called Atomic Free Zones in Scandinavia. That proposal soon became the official policy of the Labor Party, paving the way for its opposition to the Pershing and Cruise missiles.

Aftenposten, Norway's leading daily newspaper, states that Mr. Evensen's speech was actually written by Mr. Treholt. He also enlisted Mr. Evensen for a peace rally organized by the Soviet-front organization World Peace Council.

Even more shocking is Mr. Treholt's role in the 1976 negotiations in Moscow on the division of the Barents Sea. The provisional agreement negotiated by Mr. Evensen weakens the Norwegian claim to a vast area with possibly enormous deposits of oil and gas. In spite of strong opposition from the conservative and center parties, the agreement was signed by the Labor premier. Mr. Treholt was not only providing the KGB with information on the Norwegian strategy, he also worked hard to influence the Norwegian press. A number of

journalists present in Moscow were literally taken for a ride by Mr. Treholt, who organized an excursion to Murmansk to keep them away from the action.

From 1979 until 1981 Mr. Treholt was a senior member of the Norwegian delegation to the United Nations in New York. But Norwegian intelligence, assisted by the FBI, by that time had begun an investigation. Mr. Treholt, a passionate jogger, met his KGB contacts while running in Central Park. FBI agents made several photographs of his encounters with Soviet contacts, probably getting a fair amount of exercise in the process.

A question raised by many Norwegians these days is whether Mr. Treholt has unknown colleagues in the Norwegian administration. Norwegian intelligence believes he has.

Charges of Soviet manipulations within the peace movement and other left-leaning circles are usually dismissed as McCarthyism by Europe's intellectuals. Those who, in spite of vilification and abuse, have persisted in their belief in Soviet subversion have received unsolicited assistance from Mr. Treholt.

Maybe our generation will never know the extent of Soviet infiltration of Western elites, but it has become not only a legitimate but indeed an urgent concern.

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